Online Publisher Lulu Angles For The Next Wave Of Self-Publishing With Picture.com

Founded in 2002 by Red Hat's Bob Young, Lulu is one of the oldest self-publishing houses on the Internet. Initially the company offered printing services and editing tools for self-published authors and, arguably, in 2002 they would have still been called a vanity press. Now, however, they're another solid link in the chain between authors and readers.

This month the company launched a new photo book printing division, a move that runs parallel to the way the market is going. While most fiction and non-fiction is ending up on reading devices, folks still love a good album. The service, available at Picture.com allows for instant photobook generation and the printed end products are handsomely bound books, calendars, and even business class brochures and marketing collateral.

According to Lyra research, half of all American households with kids under 5 have ordered picture books and the market is set to double from 42 million units to 78 million by 2014.

I spoke with founder Bob Young about the move into the pictures space and how it felt to be one of the first to market in the ebook era.

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